# Is Diabetes More Violent Than War?
## By Dr. Jeffrey L Hagen

WAR. Only those who have survived one know its harsh reality. We should recognize and honor those who have served and sacrificed much, including life and limb. We acknowledge the thousands who gave their very lives in military service. Between World War 1 and the present, an estimated **19,000** amputations, at least, have been performed on American soldiers during their military service. These amputations represent partial or complete loss of limbs with their associated life-long disabilities.

As bad as that loss is, consider this: In the United States alone, in *one* year (2010), about ***73,000*** amputations were performed in relation to diabetes. Most diabetic-related amputations are of the toes, feet, and legs.  On a yearly scale, U.S. military operations account for about 192 amputations per year compared to over 70,000 in one year related to diabetes.  So from the standpoint of limb loss and all that entails - which is more violent? War or diabetes?

**How does diabetes cause so many amputations?**

Uncontrolled diabetes means blood sugar levels are too high over a long time. This causes damage all over the body in many ways, including nerve and circulatory damage to the feet and lower legs. This causes people to injure their feet and not feel the damage until it is too late and infection has set in. Combined with bad circulation, the wounded limb does not have adequate blood supply to heal the damage and so, the limb must be surgically removed.

If you think controlling your diabetes is inconvenient and challenging, then imagine the "inconvenience" of losing parts of your body. Now the good news: THIS IS ALL PREVENTABLE. Do what it takes to take control of your lifestyle to be healthy. Let your healthcare team help you *obtain and maintain* healthy control of your diabetes and lifestyle. It is worth every effort.

Don't believe me? Ask a "veteran" diabetic patient who has lost a limb.

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